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A
SERMON
UPON
CONFORMITY
OF THE
Humane Will
TO THE
DIVINE:
FROM
ACTS. 9. 6.

Lord, what wilt thou have
me to do?

This SERMON was Compos'd and Preach'd
at *Pembroke* near *Milford-Haven* in *Wales*, a-
bout Eight Years ago.

By *Joseph Aickin*, Clerk.

^K
DUBLIN:

Printed near the Theatre-Royal in *Smock-Alley* for the Au-
thor: And are to be Sold at his House in *Mary-Street*
near *Capel-Street*, and by the Book-Sellers. 1705.



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To their
EXCELLENCIES

SIR *Richard Cox* Knight,
Lord High Chancellor:
And the Right Honourable
John Lord Cuts, Lieute-
nant-General: **LORDS-**
JUSTICES General and
General Governors of **IRE-**
LAND.

Joseph Aickin Clerk, Humbly De-
dicateth this **SERMON.**

Candid READER.

ABout Eight Years ago I Preach'd this SERMON at Pembroke in Wales, as I was coming to Ireland with my Family, and lay Wind-bound in Milford-Haven. Doctor Griffith once a Fellow of this Colledge, who Dwells at Pembroke, and the Reverend Mr. Pool then Minister of Pembroke, can attest the truth hereof. I have added and altered but a very few Paragraphs of it; and the reason I publish it now, is to move the Hearts of good Christians to relieve my necessitous Condition; for I have been near Eight Years in Ireland, having no Subsistence allow'd me as a Clergy-man, (though recommended hither by their Excellencies the LORDS JUSTICES of ENGLAND) except what small thing I got by Baptizing and Marrying the poorer sort of People; which nothing but fatal necessity could have mov'd me to do; having a Wife and four small Children to maintain. I am worn out with Crosses and Afflictions, and not able any longer to strive against the Stream; and am willing to submit to the Will of God; and yet I cannot see my Wife and Children perish. I do therefore intreat your Charity towards settling my Wife and Children in an honest way of Living; and I shall Pray for all my Benefactors Temporal and Eternal Welfare. I am

Your Daily Orator.

June 30th, 1705.
Dublin.

10 AP 66

Joseph Aickin.

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SERMON

UPON

ACTS, Chap. 9. Verse 6.

*And he trembling and astonish-
ed, said, Lord, what wilt
thou have me to do? &c.*

PErsecuting and Unconverted *Paul*, having obtained a commission and authority from the high Priest, to apprehend all the Disciples of Christ, both men and women, which were at *Damascus* and to bring them bound to *Jerusalem*, was on the way surpriz'd and cast to the ground, by a wonderful and resplendent lightning from Heaven. Nothing but a Miracle and that a very amazing one too, could obstruct his bloody and persecuting Designs: The Preaching of the Apostles, whom without doubt he had heard, especially that of *St. Stephen*, who did great Wonders and Miracles, so that the *Jews* were not able to resist the Wisdom and Spirit by which he spake, had not been able to convert his obdurate Heart: nor the

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glorious shining of his Face, even like the Face of an Angel, had wrought no effect upon *Paul*: besides that of obdurateness. For *Paul* was consenting to *St. Stephens* Death: he made havock of the Church, entring into every House hailing Men and Women to Prison: till he had banished all the Disciples of Christ except the Apostles from *Jerusalem*: and having thus driven them from *Jerusalem*: he was still unsatiate and resolv'd to follow and persecute them in distant Regions. In this furious Humor attended with a strong Guard, he is cast down to the Earth by a sudden and shining glance of Lightning from Heaven. Hence 1st. we may observe, that no Commission, or Guard how strong soever is able to withstand the Finger of God: *Paul* is overcome and lies prostrate on the Ground. 2d. Nothing but the Finger of God is able to conquer some obstinate Sinners. 3d. Hence we may likewise observe, that obstinacy of Opinion is the bane of Mankind; Will not Reason convince thee? Will not the Preaching of the Gospel in Purity convince thee? Will not the Testimony of holy Men, who died attesting the Truth of the Gospel, and sealing it with their Blood convince thee? Will not the operation of Miracles which hitherto has been accounted an infallible Conviction turn thy hard Heart? Must our Saviour himself leave those blest Regions above, and descend to the Earth again in Thunder and Lightning to convince thee of the Truth of his Religion? Expect not a Messenger from the dead: you have not only *Moses* and the *Prophets*, which testify of Christ: but you have his own Doctrine and Miracles, and a large system of the Christian Religion written by the Apostles

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posses by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, hearken unto them; and do not continue obstinate like *Paul*, till he heard a Voice saying, *Saul, Saul*, why persecutest thou me? Hence 1st. we may conceive the tender bowels of Compassion of our Saviour, who thinks himself persecuted, when any of his poor Protestants are injur'd. *Paul*, in persecuting those poor People, thou persecutest me. It is hard for thee to kick against the Pricks. *Nemo me impune lacesset*. In hurting those Disciples of mine, thou wilt injure thyself. 2^d. Hence likewise we may observe, That in the great Work of Conversion of a Sinner, our Saviour offers no force or violence upon our Wills and Reason; For he argues the Case very mildly with *Paul*: *Saul, Saul*, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the Pricks. Then *Paul* said, who art thou Lord, and the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *Paul, Paul*, quit this blind Zeal thou bearest to the *Mosaical* and Ceremonial Law, the antiquated Religion of thy Fore-Fathers, which thou wast taught at the Feet of *Gamaliel*: it will do thee no good now; my Incarnation and Death have abolished that. Thy Commission and Guards thou seest, are not able to Protect thee against a Crucified Jesus: one Ray of my Glory has crush'd all thy lofty Designs: I have got thee under me, and in my Power, and am able, but not willing to destroy thee, if thou wilt yield and Repent. Then *Paul* trembling and astonished said. This was indeed an amazing and astonishing Dispensation to *Paul*: he little thought that Jesus whom the *Jews* esteemed an Impostor was alive: O wonderful Mystery! O Jesus art thou alive whom I believed to be dead:

art thou so Powerful and Glorious, whom I have so often mocked at: then it is high Time for me to submit. *Paul* begins now to tremble and labour in the Pangs of the new Birth: he now begins to beg Pardon, being fully sensible of his Error: he is really convinc'd of his Folly, and blind Zeal, and highly sensible of his Guilt: he labours under a remorse of Conscience, and knowing how injurious he has been to Christ and his Disciples, do's not know as yet, whether he may expect Pardon: yet he do's not Despair: but resolves to submit himself wholly to Christ: and to conform his Will to the Divine Will: in these Words which I have chosen to be the Subject of my following Discourse; *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

In the Study of Religion and Virtue, some Devotists cry up Patience, others Obedience, some extol Humility or Demission of Mind: others prefer Justice: and the Generality admire Charity as the Queen of Virtues; But in my Opinion all such Religious Persons are far void of their aim: for the Virtue and Grace prescribed in my Text, that is, to Will what God Wills, is the main and principal Duty of a Christian: for *Paul* by conforming his Will to the Divine Will of Christ, became a most Glorious Saint, and the Chief of the Apostles of Christ: tho' before a bloody Persecutor; Hence we may learn to have a charitable Opinion of all new Converts to our Religion, from this Instance of St. *Paul*, who became a Glorious Saint, of an Obdurate and Persecuting Enemy. From this first Prayer of St. *Paul* to our Saviour: *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* I deduce this great and excellent Doctrine.

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That, it is the indispensable Duty of every Christian, to conform his Will to the Will of God. This was the earnest desire of Christ himself in his Agonies: not my Will, but Thine be done: *Mat. 26. 9. And He went a little further, and fell on his Face and prayed, saying, O! my Father, if it be Possible, let this Cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.* In Asserting the Truth of this Doctrine, I shall with God Almighty's Assistance, deliver all that I have to say, in these Three Principal Heads.

I. I shall Teach you some Rules, whereby you may know the Will of God in most difficult Cases.

II. I shall Teach you, what Duties the Will of God requires from all his Servants, in a more particular manner.

III. I shall give you some sure and certain Signs of a Will that is truly conform'd to the Divine Will: whereby you may Judge, whether you be in a State of Grace, or no.

I. I shall Teach you some Rules, whereby you may know the Will of God in most difficult Cases: and the first Rule is this.

I. Whatsoever leads us away from God, is against the Will of God, and whatsoever invites and draws us to God, is conformable to the Will of God: *1. Thess. 4. 3. For this is the Will of God, even our Sanctification*: therefore whatsoever do's not tend to our Sanctification is not agreeable to the Will of God. Do thy Companions, thy Trade or way of Living lead thee away from Holiness? Then thy Company, thy Trade or way of Living, are not agreeable to the Will of God. Art thou less Holy, then when thou

thou engagedst thy self in them : renounce them all : for be sure they are not conformable to the Divine Will : because by degrees they have drawn thee away from God.

II. The Will of God is most evidently known by the Scriptures, wherein the whole Will of God is revealed : therefore in any doubtful Case, we must not only enquire what the Law of God approves, but we must likewise search what is more or less conformable to it ; When the Rich Young Man askt our Saviour, what he must do to inherit Eternal Life : our Saviour answered him in short, thou knowest the Commandments. *Abraham* taught *Dives* the same Lesson, tho, in Hell : they have *Moses* and the Prophets, let them hear them.

III. In most difficult and doubtful Cases, you must have Recourse unto some Learned and Holy Minister of the Church. When *Paul* had submitted himself to Christ, and prayed him to Teach him his Will, in these Words, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do* : Christ did not burthen him with Precepts, nor did he infuse all knowledge into him at first, but sent him to *Ananias* a Disciple of Christs : in the following Words of my Text : *go into the City. and it shall be told thee what thou must do.* It is the Will of God therefore, that we should Learn the Will of God from the Ministers of the Gospel. So *Cornelius* was directed by God to send for St. *Peter* to Instruct him ; And *Phillip* was directed by the Spirit of God, to go and join himself to the Eunuchs Chariot, to Baptize and Instruct him in the Faith : nay St. *Paul* himself a long time after his Conversion, who had been the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, for many Years :

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Years : as if he had been one of the least of the Disciples, go's up to *Jerusalem*, and lays his Doctrine before the Chief Apostles, and makes them Judges thereof: *Gallat. 2. 1, 2. And I went up by Revelation and Communicated to them that Gospel, which I Preach among the Gentiles.* Could not he, who Revealed to him, to undertake this Journey, have Taught him those Difficulties? No, God will have Men to be Taught by Men: *Jer. 6. 16. Stand in the way, and see, and ask for the Old Paths : where is the good Way and walk therein.* Hence you may learn the Dignity of the Ministerial Function: for we do not Teach cunningly devised Fables : but Reveal unto you the Oracles and Will of God : and are not to be mocked at, by every comical Fop, or conceited *Ignoramus*.

IV. But if you have neither Time nor Opportunity to ask the Advice of the Church : then consider seriously with your selves : which of the two Things about which ye doubt, be most agreeable to your own Will, to the desire of your Flesh, to your own Opinion : and when you have found out this, then reckon, that, that which is most agreeable to your own will is not agreeable to the Will of God, for generally that which is pleasing to the Flesh, is displeasing to God. *Colloss. 3. 5. Mortify therefore your Members, which are upon the earth, for which things the wrath of God cometh.* But in indifferent things, let reason, conscience, and the practice of the Church direct you.

V. In doubtful Cases, it is reasonable to ask by prayer with St. *Paul, Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* when these dark clouds of difficulties arise

over us, let us by prayer knock at the Gates of Heaven; Prayer opens the Gates of Heaven, especially if it be continual and fervent. But you'll Object; I have been praying to God a long time, perhaps for Riches for a greater Subsistence, for reclaiming a bad Husband or a disobedient Child; *and God has not granted my Petition as yet*; but pray Consider, whether you have not asked amiss; had God given you Riches would you have spent them for his Glory, and not upon your own Lusts. Perhaps you have been the cause of your Husbands unkindness, and of your Childs disobedience; but grant you are in the right, perhaps God designs to try your perseverance, and so to reward your long patience more bountifully, than you could ever have expected; and perhaps tho' he do's not grant thee that request, yet he recompences thee, with something that is better for thee.

Lastly, No Man finds out the Will of God sooner or better, than he who desires most sincerely to conform his will to the Will of God. Our only way is to submit to the Will of God, *not my will but Thine be done*, was our Saviours resignation in his Agony; he that commits the direction of his will to the Will of God, can never err. My proposed Method now leads me to inform you, *what Duties the Will of God requires from all his Servants in a more particular manner*.

1. The first Duty that Christ requires of all his Servants, is, stedfastness in the Faith; be stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the fear of the Lord. *Mark. 13. 13. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved*. They therefore that forsake our Establish't Church and embrace Popery, Presbitery

or

or any other *Sett* or *Schism*, do not conform them-
 selves to the *Divine Will*. In the late King *James's*
 Reign, many embraced *Popery*, such as generally
 follow the Court Religion; and in the late King
William's Reign (of Blessed Memory) many Apostati-
 zed from the Church and turn'd *Presbyterians*, upon
 much such another account; but there is no such
 Temptation now, Her Majesty we thank God, is a zealous
 Member of our *Church*, and do's promote and
 nurse the Devotists thereof: therefore Beloved, be
 not carried away with any wind of false Doctrine.
Dissenters themselves, I mean the *Presbyterians*, allow
 our *Church* to be sound in the fundamentals of Faith, and
 only jangle with us about the Ceremonies of Wor-
 ship, which are things of an indifferent nature, and
 which might be omitted, were they not established by
 the antient Practice of the Church, and by the Laws
 of our Land; and therefore they have no sufficient
 reason to Dissent from us. I wonder any of our
Church can be tempted to *Presbitery*, since they have
 neither Ordination of Bishops nor Divine Call to
 preach the Gospel; can one *Presbiter* ordain another?
 a Lay-man may as well preach the Gospel and admin-
 ister the Sacraments; did not *Mechanicks* do it in
Cromwells time; and dare any one of you justify the
 transactions of that Age; did they not consent to a
 directory of Prayer, a pretty large Book: but could
 not get it established by Law; why should they then
 quarrel against the *Common-Prayer-Book*, for a *dire-*
ctory-Prayer-Book and a *Common-Prayer-Book*,
 are all one in the *Greek*; why should they
 then dissent from our *Church* about indifferent
 things,

things, which God hath neither command d nor forbidden ; such as are many of the circumstances and ceremonies of Gods Worship, because in things lawful and indifferent, we are bound by the laws of Decency and Civility not to thwart the general Practice for by the Commands of God, we are certainly obliged to obey the commands of lawful Authority. *Submit your selves to every ordinance of man, even for the Lords sake. 1. Pet. 3. 2.* But in things plainly contrary to the evidence of sense or reason, or to the Word of God ; a Man would complement no Man or number of Men, nor ought he to pin his Faith upon any Church in the World, much less upon any single Man, no not the *Pope* himself, *tho' there were never so many probable Arguments brought for the proof of his Infallibility.* In this case a Man ought to be singular and stand alone against the whole World, against the wrath and rage of a King, and all the terrors of his fiery Furnace ; besides if all the Mathematicians of all Ages should declare, that two times one, did not make two, but three ; this would not move me in the least to be of their mind ; just so in matters of Religion, if any Church declare, that the *Bread and Wine in the Sacrament*, by virtue of the consecration of the Priest, are substantially changed into the natural *Body and Blood of Christ*. I should Laugh at so monstrous an absurdity ; or, that *Images are to be worshipped* ; or, that *the worship of God is to be perform'd in an unknown Tongue* ; or, that *the Scriptures are to be lockt up from the Vulgar* ; or, that *the Sacrifice of Christ, was not offered once for all* ; but ought to be repeated every day ten thousand times, and that *the people ought to receive in one kind only,* and

and that the saving efficacy of the Sacraments, doth depend upon the intention of the Priest: These are such impositions upon Sense and Reason, and Revelation, that no Man in his sober Wits can receive them. Thus Dr. Tillotson. But of all Doctrines beware of Socinianism or Deism, who rob Christ of his Deity and make him only a God by Deputation, that is, a meer Man. I said ye are Gods, but yet ye shall die like men; this is nothing but the old Arian Heresy reviv'd, and now crept in among the foolish Wits of this Age, who begin to call in question the great Mysteries of our Faith. But it is no wonder, when Men have once been tempted to make defection from the Established Church, if they fall into such horrible delusions of Satan; and it is lamentable, that even many such are in these Nations, but I thank God, not amongst the Professors of our Church; for the Pit they were preparing for us, they have fallen into themselves. Therefore Beloved, continue ye stedfast in the Faith of the Church of England; which by all the Protestant Churches abroad, is allow'd to be sound in it's fundamentals of Faith, and is not impugn'd by any Church except the Papists, betwixt whom and us, I think the Controversy is sufficiently decided already.

2. The next Duty that Jesus requires of his Servants, is Justice in their actions. Prov. 21. 3. To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. Jeremy 22. 16. He judg'd the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him: was not this to know me saith the Lord. Rom. 13. 7. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour, owe no Man any thing. Were Cato,

Seneca,

Seneca, Plato or Epictetus alive, how would they be ashamed to see, how little effects their Works have wrought: How much more ought we Christians to see, that even our *Saviours Doctrine of Justice* is trod under foot, by all ranks and condition of Men. *Give to Caesar the things that are Caesars, and to God the things that are Gods.* They that act unjustly forsake the Faith, for Faith and a good Conscience are inseparable companions. *1. Timoth. 1. 19. Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwrack.* When injustice enters into the house, Faith flies out of the doors; a Religious unjust Man is a contradiction. Therefore Beloved, in all your dealings, let Justice be your guide, lest you *make shipwrack of the faith.* It is very unjust in Trades-men to exact more profit by their Goods, than is reasonable: how lamentable a Vice is it, to hear some Merchants say, as I hope to be saved, it cost me so much: dear Friends, in telling a Lie, thou renoucest Christ; thy Salvation is a precious thing, don't forfeit thy right to it for a trifle. Remember the fatal end of *Ananias and Sapphira*, who Lied to the *Holy Ghost.* Do not enrich thy self by extortion, unjust Gains will soon moulder away and seldome continue to the third or fourth Generation. Justice is one of the greatest attributes of God, and the nearer we attain to it, the more we are conform'd to the *Divine Will.* Let the Judge decree righteous judgment, and the Justice take no bribe, let not the Clergy-man oppress the people in their Tithes, (this cut off the House of *Eli* from the Priests Office) let not the Lawyer extort Fees, let the Merchant be satisfied with a reasonable gain, and let the

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the poor Man keep his Word: for whosoever act contrary to the principles of justice, renounce the Faith.

3. The Third Duty that Jesus requires of all his Servants, is *Charity*; not only that of giving Alms to the Poor, but Charity of Opinion: 1. Cor. 13. 1. *Though I speak with the Tongue of Men and Angels and have not Charity: I am become as sounding Brass or a tinkling Cymbal: and the* 3. v. *And tho' I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and tho' I give my body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing.* What? give my goods to feed the Poor, and yet want Charity; therefore by Charity is also meant, that Charity of opinion, as it is explained in the 5. v. *Charity thinketh no evil.* We ought to be Charitable to all that stand in need of our assistance, whether of Advice or Money. There is greater Charity in advising our Neighbour, when he is plung'd in a labyrinth of difficulty, than when we relieve his needy Condition, with Money, Cloaths or Food. How few Christians labour to reclaim their seduced and perverted Brethren: it is the Duty of every Christian to endeavour the Conversion of his Brother, if he be enveagled or seduced from the Faith. How few visit the Sick or Prisoner, not considering that what is done in this, is done to Christ himself. *I was sick and ye visited me, I was in prison and ye came unto me: verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto the least of my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Besides, we ought to relieve our necessitous Brother with Food and Raiment. *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink, I was naked, and ye cloathed me, I was a*

stranger, and ye took me in. Math. 25. 35, 36. He compr
that seeth his Brother in want, and shutteth his bow- actions
els of compassion, *how can the love of God dwell in* sophy
him. I need not urge any other Arguments to prove *Abstin*
the necessity of this Doctrine: for nothing discovers to gra
a true Christian disposition more, than Charity to done t
the distressed: but how little 'tis practiced by Christi- *self be*
ans in this lukewarm Age, woful experience witness- *Childr*
eth; when even the Rich shut their Gates at Dinner- 3. 14
time against the Poor. How far, that most noble *py are*
Charity of opinion is neglected and slighted, is evi- *ctrine*
dent, when we can hardly entertain a good opinion *bid to*
of any of a contrary Perswasion. How inhumane is *bi fier*
it, to condemn all our Enemies to Hell, placing our *tural*
selves on the Throne of God, in whose Power it is *rende*
to save or condemn. If it were in our power to save *wrong*
or condemn, I am afraid, few would be saved. O! *nor to*
Christian, be charitable to thine Enemies: how hor- *stian*
ribly wilt thou be amazed and confounded, when at *and t*
the Day of Judgment, thou shalt meet even thy great- *ctrine*
est Enemies in those Regions of Bliss. The greatest *stian*
revenge that the Christian Religion allows thee to take *our*
of thine Enemy, is to out-do him in Charity: For *mane*
my part, I cannot damn the old Heathen World, *credi*
especially those Moralists, whose memory we still ac- *The*
count sacred; and as the *Jewish* Fathers before *ble C*
Christ, were undoubtedly saved by their Faith in a *with*
Saviour to come; so I am not certain, but the present *Dau*
Jews may be saved, who still believe in a Saviour to *go t*
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4. The fourth Duty that Christ enjoins his Ser-
vants to practice, is, *to suffer Injuries patiently, and*
to offer Violence to no Body. This is a large and com-
prehensive

36. His comprehensive Duty, which extends it's self to all the actions of our life. *Epictetus* comprehended all Philosophy and Religion, in two short words, *Abstine & Sustine* : abstain from doing wrong to gratify thy sensual Lusts: and suffer all wrongs done to thee patiently. *Rom. 8. 16, 17. The spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the Children of God, if so be that we suffer with him. 1. Pet. 3. 14. But and if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye* : As we are obliged by the Christian Doctrine to suffer wrongs patiently, so we are no less forbidden to do wrong to any Person whatsoever. *Quod tibi fieri non vis, alteri ne feceris*, is a principle of natural Religion : but the Divine Sanction being added, renders it more binding ; *Jer. 22. 3. And do no wrong, do no violence, to the stranger, to the fatherless, nor to the widow, neither shed innocent blood.* A Christian is obliged by the Divine Will to do no wrong, and to suffer all wrongs. This is indeed a hard Doctrine to the carnal Soul, but not to the true Christian Convert. Let us generously resolve to imitate our Lord and Master, who suffered the most inhumane barbarities, that ever were heard of, with incredible patience ; who being reviled, reviled not again. The practice of this age is quite contrary to this noble Christian temper. For one Brother goes to Law with another, the Father against the Son, and the Daughter against the Mother ; one Neighbour will go to Law with another for a hasty word or two ; nay, Clergy-men themselves go to Law with one another, not considering what a bad Example they give to their Flocks ; nay, some People are at Law all the days of their Lives : *1. Cor. 6, 7. Now therefore there*

is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another : why do ye not rather take wrong ? why do ye not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded ? Rom. 8. 18. The sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared, with the glory which shall be revealed. Dear Christians, submit to this noble Christian Vertue, it is noble to suffer injuries and affronts, if there be any truth in the Bible. Math. 39. 40. If any one smite thee on the one cheek, hold up to him the other, if any one take thy coat, give him thy cloak also. How barbarous a thing then is it, to see two Gentlemen, who, but a few moments before were dear Companions, Challenge and Kill one another for a trifle. Mat. 5. 22. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil : whosoever shall say unto his Brother thou fool, shall be in danger of Hell fire. If then it be such a hainous offence to call thy Brother fool, how then canst thou expect pardon, who call'st him Rogue and Rascal.

5. The fifth Duty that Jesus commands his Servants to practice, is, *modesty in Words and Behaviour*. To what degree of impudence in conversation, Men are arrived unto, is not to be denyed : when the common discourse of the Vulgar is nothing but obscenity, and their Gestures impudent beyond credibility. How unfit these things are for Christians, I need not labour much to evince. The conversation of a Turk may be a pattern to reclaim them. Modesty in words and behaviour, ought to be one distinguishing Character of a Christian ; and it is a horrid shame for the Servants of Jesus, to be out-done by the Worshippers of an Impostor. For a Gentleman to utter such speeches as will put a Lady to the blush, is very culpable, and

to law one for a Lady to attire her self so, as to become a tem-
 pation to a Gentleman, is a sin of a hainous nature.
 1. Tim. 2. 9. *In like manner also, that Women adorn
 themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and
 sobriety: not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or
 costly array; Our God is a pure and holy God, and
 cannot behold iniquity; since therefore Women are
 commanded to be covered for fear of displeasing their
 guardian Angels, which continually attend them. 1.
 Cor. 11. 10. How much more ought they to be af-
 fraid of offending the immaculate Jesus, who always
 beholds them, and who sees and detests their amorous
 Intreagues, and knows every thought of their Hearts:*
 6. The sixth Duty that Christ requires of a Christi-
 an Convert, is, *Humility in Conversation. 1. Pet. 5. 5.
 Likewise ye younger, submit your selves unto the elder;
 yea all of you be subject one to another, and be cloathed
 with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth
 grace to the humble. It is a shame then for the rich
 Men of this World to despise their fellow Creatures,
 who are only by providence made their Inferiors. This
 is contrary to the very foundation of Christianity.*
 Christ himself, tho' God shew'd a far more gene-
 rous principle, in washing his Disciples Feet. *Who-
 soever will be chief among you, let him be your
 Minister: whosoever acts contrary to this precept of hu-
 mility, is no Convert nor Disciple of Jesus. In Heaven
 where we have a just Judge, there is no respect of Per-
 sons: if there be any, it shall be in favour of the poor.*
*Thou badst thy good things in the other World, Lazarus
 in this; he is comforted, and thou art tormented. Luke
 16. 25. How comes it to be such a hard thing for
 rich Men to enter into the Kingdom of God?*

Answer.

1. Because rich Men generally confide in their Riches, and make them their God.

2. Because their Riches puff them up; and they think their Riches give them a prerogative to trample upon their fellow Creatures. This is contrary to the very nature of Christianity, which is to be *meek and humble*. *Jam. 4. 6. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.* It was Pride, that ruined the most glorious Angel of Heaven, and sent him headlong to the bottomless Pit; and it hath ruined many a fair Creature since: Therefore Beloved, avoid Pride as thy greatest Enemy.

7. The seventh Duty that Jesus requires of all his Disciples, is, *to love one another*. *John 13. 34. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* *1. Pet. 2. 17. Love the Brotherhood.* By the Brotherhood here may be understood, Christians of one Religion and one Church. I will not take upon me to determine the Latitude or Bounds of the Church: or whether different Perswasions may not be the same Religion: it is not every nicety or ceremony, that will exclude those that fear God sincerely, out of the communion of Saints: there were great janglings betwixt the *Grecian* and *Roman* Churches, even in the times of Purity; nay, and even amongst the *Apostles* themselves: *To love the Brotherhood*, therefore in my opinion, is to love all Christians of whatsoever Perswasion, that sincerely fear God. There are times of divisions in matters of Religion: the only cement and cord that can preserve the Members of our Church, is this Christian love. He that entirely loves his Brother,

ther,

ther, can never part from him : if we were so linked together in the bonds of love ; the Gates of Hell, Schism and Error, could never prevail against us. Let the *Papist* and *Presbyterian*, who are led by a blind Zeal, condemn our Church, let us forgive them, and pray for their Conversion : let not their furious Zeal, prevent our Charity for them ; for by so doing, we shall heap coals of fire upon their heads. The decay of this fervent love amongst Brethren, is the main cause of so many peoples defection from the Faith. *Math. 24. 12. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.* And I am ashamed and sorry to tell you, that all other Perswasions take greater care and shew more fervent love to their Brotherhood than we : I wish to God I had not just reason to publish this Reflection. *Popery* threatens us with the Sword on the one hand, and *Presbitery* increases daily on the other hand : now the only way to prevent both, is this fervent love and unanimity.

8. The last and great Duty which Christ requires of all his Servants, is, to love God with all our heart. *Deut. 11. 1. Therefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God. Psalms 31. 23. O love the Lord all ye his Saints.* Thy Duty towards God, is to love him with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy Soul. *Rom. 8. 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ, shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword. 38. and 39. v. Neither life nor death, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is the height of Ingratitude, to love any other*

other thing better than Christ, who died for the love of us. Now dear Christian, consider seriously with thy self, and as thou tenders the salvation of thy precious Soul, whether there be any other object in thy Heart, that stands in competition with God: if there be, cast it out, *for God is a jealous God, and hates to be rivall'd.* Dost thou place thy whole delight in pleasures, cast them off: *with God there is pleasures for ever more.* Dost thou delight in honours, cast them down at the feet of Christ: *and receive a Crown of Glory eternal in the Heavens.* Dost thou delight in delicious Food and sparkling Wine, and spend'st much time about them: forsake them; Hunger will make the meanest Food as pleasant; *go to the Lord's Supper, and eat Christs Flesh, and drink his Blood worthily, and these will nourish thy Body and Soul unto Eternal Life.* Dost thou delight in a Dalilah: Remember Solomon, the richest and wisest Prince in the World, and yet ruined by lew'd Women. *Prov. 23. 27. For a Whore is a deep ditch, and a strange Woman is a narrow pit:* she will not only draw thee from God: but plunge thee into temporal calamities and eternal ruin: and she will ungratefully forsake thee at last. when thy Money and Vigour is spent: *fly her detestful embraces. Prov. 6. 26. For by means of a whorish Woman, a Man is brought to a morsel of Bread.* Dost thou delight in Riches and Bags of Money, more than in God? consider, that it is but Dust, and it cannot redeem thee from Death: nor can it purchase Heaven: and besides, it often flies away and forsakes it's Adorers and Servants in their greatest Distress: and if it do's not, yet thou can'st carry none of it to the other World: and if thou did'st, would it be useful to thee

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thee in that Estate : would it mitigate the fury of thy tormenting Devil ; if not, away with it, it is not worthy thy love. Now Christ will never fail thee nor forsake thee in thy greatest distress, if thou cleave to him by love, he will guide thee through the Valley of the shadow of Death, when all thy Darlings have forsaken thee. When the Wife of thy Bosom, and the Children of thy Loins, and thy Servants whom thou hast nourished like Sons have forsaken thee; Nay, and thy dearest Friends and Companions, have bid thee an everlasting Adieu : *Then Christ will embrace thee, and carry thee in his Bosome into everlasting joy and felicity.* He is the only true Friend that stands by a Man in distress, in anguish and sorrow : *Christ never forsook a Servant yet. Math. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest for your Souls. Jer. 31. 3. Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.*

Thirdly, and Lastly,

I promised to give you some sure and certain signs of a Will, that is truly conform'd to the Will of God : whereby you may judge, whether you be in a state of Grace or no.

But of them briefly:

The signs of a Will truly conform'd to the Will of God, are these.

D

I. He

1. He that has his will truly conform'd to the Divine Will, desires to do all things according to the pleasure and direction of God : and therefore he begins nothing, without imploring the Divine Assistance : he that follows the Will of God, enters upon no Business; till he has begg'd God to be his helper. How many Families are ill rul'd, how many Marriages are ill contracted, how many Kingdoms are ill govern'd, how many Injuries are daily done to one another, because God is not consulted before hand. The Children of *Israel* committed a great fault in receiving the *Gibeonites* into League, without the advice of God: *Josh. 9. 14. And the Men took of their Victuals, and asked not counsel at the Mouth of God.*

2. It is a sure sign of true Devotion to the Divine Will, not only not to be affraid of the present Calamities and Afflictions, which we suffer ; but to be willing to suffer more : if it please God to inflict them on us. *Psalms. 41. 4. The Lord will strengthen him on the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.* Do's fortune frown? submit to God: This is a sure sign of a Man's will being conform'd to God's Will, if it do's not refuse to follow him, through all rough and difficult Paths. *Lord wilt thou take my Riches from me? I submit: Wilt thou take my good Name from me? I am content. Wilt thou take my dear Child from me? I am satisfy'd. Wilt thou take my Life from me? I am at thy disposal.* O happy Resignation.

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3. The third sign of a Man's will being conform'd to the Will of God : is a great distrust and diffidence of our own Abilities. This is a true Christian Virtue : for he that depends in his own Abilities, ascribes all his happiness and good fortune, to the power and goodness of God : and all that's amiss he imputes to himself. He knows that he is able to do all things, but by God's help and assistance alone. *Prov. 14. 16. A wise Man feareth and departeth from evil, but the Fool rageth and is confident.*

4. He that has his will conform'd to the Will of God, has the greatest confidence and trust in God imaginable. When such a one is injur'd, he do's not immediately think on revenge, but leaves it to God, who saw and heard it : by this Virtue he is not afraid of Hell nor all it's Fiends, who dare not hurt him beyond what God permits. *Prov. 24. 30. There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord. Jacob* was eminent for this Virtue, when *Laban* dealt deceitfully with him : and changed his wages ten times, thinking thereby to impoverish him : but all in vain, every thing turned to the advantage of *Jacob*, because he trusted in God. *Sennacherib* threatned the utter destruction of *Jerusalem*, yet neither he nor his Army escaped the revenging hand of God : for an Angel of God smote his Army, and his Sons slew himself. He that trusts in God, has all his Enemies tributaries to him. Therefore dear Christian, trust in God, and leave all revenge to him. *Deut. 32. 35. To me belongeth vengeance and recompence, their foot shall slide in due time.*

5. A fifth sign of a will truly conform'd to the Divine Will, is to bear all injuries with a generous submission and silence : look upon our most patient Saviour, who was silent amongst innumerable Reproaches and Torments. The High Priest accused him; he was silent : they objected several Crimes against him, he held his Peace : they Derided and Mock't him on the Cross: he was not so much as moved at their Barbarity. *David* knew the advantage of this silence: *I was silent and opened not my Mouth, because thou did'st it.* Do's thy equal reproach thee ? he silent. Do's thy Inferior reproach thee ? hold thy Tongue. *Go to God and pray for thy Adversary: and thus thou shalt heap Coals of fire upon his Head.* Rom. 12. 20. *Therefore if thine Enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing, thou shalt heap Coals of fire upon his Head.*——

6. Lastly. The greatest sign of a will conform'd to God's Will, is, to undertake and attempt the most difficult things, for the honour of God: nay, to suffer Death for his sake. *Phill. 4. 13. I can do all things, through Christ which strength'neth me.* So *David: Psalm. 17. 30. In my God I can leap over a Wall.* *Math. 17. 20. If ye have Faith as a grain of Mustard-Seed, ye shall say unto this Mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible to you.*

Consider

Consider seriously what I have said, and the Lord give you a Blessing.

The Copy of the Reverend
Mr. Pountney's Certificate,
given to Mr. Aickin before
his Death.

I Do hereby Certify, That Mr. Joseph Aickin Clerk, hath been for several Years an Inhabitant of my Parish; that he is of a good Life and Conversation: That he frequents the Prayers of the Church and the Blessed Sacrament, and all the Irregularities I hear he can be justly Charg'd with, are Marrying and Christ'ning, where he has no lawful Call so to do; which

*which I believe necessity has compell'd him
to: for he has a Wife and four Children
and is in no visible way of maintainin
them.*

April the 7th,

1705.

Tho. Pountney,

*Rector of St. Mary's
Dublin.*

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